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SPEECHES ON INDIA

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SPEECHES ON INDIA

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DELIVERED BY

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

WHILE IN ENGLAND IN JULY—AUGUST, 1904

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A REQUEST having been made in several quarters for the republication of the speeches delivered by Lord Curzon during his short stay in England, in the present summer, the full text is here given of the following speeches:—

I. SPEECH ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF LONDON, AT THE GUILDHALL, ON JULY 20, 1904.

II. SPEECH AT THE MANSION HOUSE ON THE SAME DATE.

III. SPEECH ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH OF DERBY, ON JULY 28, 1904.

IV. SPEECH AT A LUNCHEON GIVEN BY THE UNITED CLUB, ON AUGUST 1, 1904.

In the first of these speeches the main subjects discussed are the place of India in the British Empire; the differences between English and Indian administration; the recent internal and external policy of the Government of India; and the bases of British rule in that country. The Mansion House speech contains a tribute to the Indian Civil Service. In the Derby speech Lord Curzon enlarges upon the necessity of keeping India outside of party, and the difficulties of Indian administration. The fourth and last speech continues the same subject, and examines the relations of India to the party system in England.

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I

SPEECH ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF LONDON, AT THE GUILDHALL, ON JULY 20, 1904

On Wednesday, July 20, 1904, Lord Curzon was presented with the Freedom of the City of London, in the Guildhall. After he had been addressed by the City Chamberlain (Sir J. Dimsdale), and had signed the Roll of Burgesses, Lord Curzon replied in the following words:—

My Lord Mayor, my Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Let me begin by thanking the Chamberlain very warmly for his kind reference to Lady Curzon. Though, as he remarked, not officially present here to-day, she is yet in this hall to hear the courteous things that he said about her, and with which, in reference to the assistance she has rendered to me and to the work that she has done in India, I venture cordially to associate myself.

My Lord Mayor, I do not suppose that there is any honour which a public man can value more highly than the Freedom of the City of London. No fee can purchase it, no conqueror can claim it as his own; it is the free gift of the corporation of the greatest city in the world, and it has the added dignity of the associations that accompany it, and

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the memory of the illustrious names with which each fresh recipient is proud to find his own enrolled. But the honour seems to me to carry an especial grace when it is conferred upon those servants of the Crown who have been serving their country in distant parts, for it shows them that in their absence they have not been altogether forgotten, and that those of you who are at the heart of Empire are not indifferent to what is passing on the outskirts.

By a law which was designed for different times, and which, in my opinion, is now obsolete, no Viceroy of India can leave India for England, whatever the urgency, public or private, without vacating his office; and so it is that a man may be absent, as I have been, from his country for an unbroken period of five and a half years without sight or sound of home. During his long exile the weight and isolation of his great post tell heavily upon him. Fatigue of body and spirit often press him down; the volume of work that he has to discharge is such as no man who has not undertaken it can well imagine. You may judge, therefore, what a reward—I had almost said, what a tonic to body and soul—is such a reception as this to such a man; how his heart warms within him at the sympathetic recognition of his countrymen, and how fresh courage and spirit are infused into him to go forth again and renew his task.

My Lord Mayor, the City Chamberlain in his speech has drawn an appreciative and flattering picture of some of the aspects of the administration with which I have been concerned. If I detected in some of his remarks the too generous partiality of one old Etonian for another, I am yet conscious of the service that he has rendered to India by inviting the

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attention of this representative assemblage to some features in our recent administration.

May I also take advantage of the present opportunity to say a few words to my countrymen about that great charge—the greatest that is anywhere borne by the English people, nay, more, in my judgment, the most onerous and the most impressive that has ever rested upon the shoulders of a conquering and civilized race? I sometimes think that the most remarkable thing about British rule in India is the general ignorance that prevails about it in England. Seventy years ago Lord Macaulay said, in his speech about the Government of India, that a broken head in Coldbath Fields produced a greater sensation amongst us than three pitched battles in India. Twenty years later Lord Dalhousie, that celebrated pro-consul, wrote that nothing short of a great victory or a great defeat in India was sufficient to create in English society even a transient interest in Indian affairs. If these are the tests of English interest in India, then, my Lords, any such service as it may have been in my power to render must be, indeed, unknown. But I think that things have somewhat advanced since those days. Communications have greatly improved between the two countries; postal and telegraphic charges have been cheapened; more cold-weather visitors come out to us in India every year; and there is always an intelligent minority of persons here who follow, with the utmost interest, everything that goes on there. Yet, in its main essentials, the indictment still remains true, and you have only to look at the morning newspapers, with rare exceptions—and there are exceptions; for instance, I was delighted to see, only

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a day or two ago, that *The Times* has announced its intention of recommencing the series of periodical articles upon India which those of us who are interested in that country used to read with so much delight in bygone days—I say you have only to look at the newspapers to see that, with rare exceptions, the average Englishman is much more concerned in the latest football or cricket match, in a motor trial, or a wrestling encounter, than he is in the greatest responsibility that has been undertaken by his fellow-countrymen on the face of the earth. Even if he looks abroad he sees more and hears more about the 11,000,000 who inhabit the Colonies than he does about the 300,000,000 who inhabit India. In the happiness of our insular detachment, or in the pride of racial expansion, he forgets that the greatest constituent of the Empire in scale and in importance lies neither in these islands, nor in the Colonies, but in our Asiatic dependency. It is true that for this ignorance and want of proportion on his part there is abundant excuse. Here are our own people; this is the hearthstone of the Empire and the nursery of the race; these islands must always be our first concern; even the Colonies are, in a sense, only one stage more distant, because they are peopled by our own kith and kin. India, on the other hand, is very remote and very unintelligible, and the average Englishman, if only he hears nothing about it from day to day, is apt to think that matters must be going on sufficiently well.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I have always ventured to hold a different idea about British rule in India. To me it is the greatest thing that the English people have done, or are doing now; it is the highest touch-stone of national duty. If the nations of the

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earth were to stand up to be judged by some supreme tribunal, I think that upon our European record, or upon our colonial record, we should survive the test. But if there were the slightest hesitation on the part of the judge or jury I would confidently throw our Indian record into the scales. For where else in the world has a race gone forth and subdued, not a country or a kingdom, but a continent, and that continent peopled, not by savage tribes, but by races with traditions and a civilization older than our own, with a history not inferior to ours in dignity or romance; subduing them not to the law of the sword, but to the rule of justice, bringing peace and order and good government to nearly one-fifth of the entire human race, and holding them with so mild a restraint that the rulers are the merest handful amongst the ruled, a tiny speck of white foam upon a dark and thunderous ocean? I hope I am no rhapsodist, but I say that I would as soon be a citizen of the country that has wrought this deed as I would be of the country that defeated the Armada, or produced Hampden and Pitt.

But we all live in a severely practical age, and I can afford to be rather more concrete in my illustrations. I should like to convey to this audience some idea of the part that India is capable of playing, nay, of the part that it has recently played in the Imperial burden. As I say, my illustrations shall be drawn from recent history and from my own experience. Two of them have been mentioned by the City Chamberlain in his speech. If you want to save your Colony of Natal from being overrun by a formidable enemy, you ask India for help, and she gives it; if you want to rescue the white men's

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legations from massacre at Peking, and the need is urgent, you request the Government of India to despatch an expedition, and they despatch it; if you are fighting the Mad Mullah in Somaliland, you soon discover that Indian troops and an Indian general are best qualified for the task, and you ask the Government of India to send them; if you desire to defend any of your extreme outposts or coaling stations of the Empire, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong-kong, even Tien-tsin or Shan-hai-kwan, it is to the Indian Army that you turn; if you want to build a railway to Uganda or in the Soudan, you apply for Indian labour. When the late Mr. Rhodes was engaged in developing your recent acquisition of Rhodesia, he came to me for assistance. It is with India coolie labour that you exploit the plantations equally of Demerara and Natal; with Indian trained officers that you irrigate Egypt and dam the Nile; with Indian forest officers that you tap the resources of Central Africa and Siam; with Indian surveyors that you explore all the hidden places of the earth.

Speaking before an audience such as this, I should wish, if I had time, my Lord Mayor, also to demonstrate that, in my opinion, India is a country where there will be much larger openings for the investment of capital in the future than has hitherto been the case, and where a great work of industrial and commercial exploitation lies before us.

Then, again, how familiar we are in recent times with the argument that India is the vulnerable point of the Empire. And assuredly it is true that if we were engaged in a great international war—which God forbid—it is not at Dover or London that one, at any rate, of your possible antagonists would strike.

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He would not bombard Quebec or land a force in Sydney Harbour. It is in Asia that the pressure would be applied; it is your Indian frontier that would bear the brunt. It is there, or thereabouts, in all probability, that the future of your dominion might be decided.

There is an old proverb which says, "He that England fain would win, must with Ireland first begin." I have always thought that this was rather a dubious compliment to our brothers across St. George's Channel, but I suppose it alludes to the times when the foreign enemy who had aggressive intentions upon us used to begin his invasion in that quarter. At all events, if you were now to substitute "India" for "Ireland" in the refrain, I do not think you would be so very far from the mark. I hope I have said enough, therefore, my Lords and Gentlemen, to show you that you cannot afford to leave India out of your calculations. She is as important to you as you are beneficial to her. In the world politics of the future believe me that India will play an increasing part, and a time will come when in our reformed Board Schools the average English boy will require to know more about India than he does now, will require to know as much about India as he now does about Marathon or Waterloo.

I grant, my Lord Mayor, that the features of government in the two countries are very different. And perhaps this is the main cause of the ignorance and misconception to which I have referred. We have in India a good many of the problems that you have here, but they are magnified almost beyond recognition by the complexity of the factors and the immensity of the scale. We also have our own problems, to

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which, in the tranquil uniformity of life in these islands, you are fortunately strangers. You have not the perpetual and harassing anxiety of a land frontier 5700 miles in length, peopled by hundreds of different tribes, most of them inured to religious fanaticism and hereditary rapine. A single outbreak at a single point may set entire sections of that frontier ablaze. Then, beyond it, we are brought into direct contact with the picturesque but perilous debility of independent, or quasi-independent, Asiatic States, some of them incurably diseased, and hastening to their fall; and behind them, again, are the muffled figures of great European Powers, advancing nearer and nearer, and sometimes finding in these conditions temptations to action that is not in strict accordance with the interests which we are bound to defend. That, my Lord Mayor, is the external problem of India.

Then, if we look within, whereas you in England have a population that is relatively homogeneous, we have to deal in India with races that are as different from each other as the Esquimaux is from the Spaniard or the Irishman from the Turk, with creeds that range between the extreme points of the basest animalism on the one hand and the most exalted metaphysics on the other, and with standards of life that cover the whole space between barbarism and civilization. You have here an aristocracy that is drawn from the people, and that goes back to it. Our aristocracy in India consists of native chiefs of diverse races, many of them as much aliens to the people as we are ourselves, presenting every variety of *status* and privilege, from the magnificent potentates that you sometimes see in this country to the pettiest landed proprietor.

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You hardly know here what the phrase "land revenue" means. In India it is the be-all and end-all of millions of the population, and it is the mainspring of our internal administration. In England your railways are built, managed, and financed by private enterprise; in India they are one of the chief charges of Government. I remember that it fell to me, as Viceroy, to issue orders, on my own responsibility, for the better accommodation of native passengers in third-class carriages. Here, in England, your education problem, as any Parliamentarian present will bear me out, is thorny enough; but it is as nothing compared with ours in India, where we are trying to graft the science of the West on to an Eastern stem; where we have to deal with religious differences, compared with which all your sectarian animosities sink into the shade; where we have a chaos of languages, and stages of mental organization that extend, as I have remarked, from the transcendentalist to the savage.

Then, here in England, you do not know what famine is. My Lord Mayor, I thank the Chamberlain for the remarks that he made on that subject in his address. It is quite true that I had to administer in India the greatest famine that has befallen that country in modern times within the range to which it applied, and I can assure you that it is an experience that would wring blood from stone. You have your sunshine and storms, your drought and floods in this country, but you do not know the awful possibilities that are summed up in the single word "monsoon," and which spell the difference in India between life and death to areas in any one of which the whole of the United Kingdom might be swallowed up. You

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have your suffering and destitution, but you have not such an appalling visitor as the plague—the plague, now in its seventh year in India, defying analysis, defeating the utmost efforts of medical skill and administrative energy, inscrutable in its origin, merciless in its ravages, sweeping off, as our records show, very often thousands in a day and tens of thousands in a week. Then, above all, your public men in England have not before them the haunting question that is always before us in India, like a riddle of the Sphinx —what is in the heart of all those sombre millions, whither are we leading them, what is it all to come to, where is the goal?

Such, my Lord Mayor, are some of the superficial differences between the problem of government in India and in England. They are, I think, sufficient to show you that those who are charged with the government of that great dependency can seldom have a careless moment or an idle hour. They are weighed down with incessant anxiety, with an almost overpowering responsibility, and with unending toil. But I can assure you that every one of them, from the Governor-General down to the youngest civilian, is proud of the duty, and resolved to do justice to it; and when the commander is called up and praised, a thrill runs down the ranks, and encourages the latest-joined private in the lines.

Sir Joseph Dimsdale said something about the character of the work in which we have been engaged during the past five years. My Lord Mayor, it has been a work of reform and reconstruction. Epochs arise in the history of every country when the administrative machinery requires to be taken to pieces and overhauled and readjusted to the altered

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necessities or the growing demands of the hour. The engines are not working to their scheduled capacity, the engines are perhaps slack or overborne. I agree with those who inscribe on their administrative banners the motto "Efficiency." But my conception of efficiency is to practise as well as to preach it. It is with this object that we have conducted an inquiry in India into every aspect of the administration. First we began with the departments themselves, the offices of Government, revising the conditions under which they work, freeing them from the impediments of excessive writing, with its consequences of strangulation of all initiative and dilatoriness in action. Then we proceeded to investigate every branch of the Government in turn. We endeavoured to frame a plague policy which should not do violence to the instincts and sentiments of the native population; a famine policy which should profit by the experience of the past and put us in a position to cope with the next visitation when unhappily it bursts upon us; an education policy which should free the intellectual activities of the Indian people, so keen and restless as they are, from the paralyzing clutch of examinations; a railway policy that will provide administratively and financially for the great extension that we believe to lie before us; an irrigation policy that will utilize to the *maximum*, whether remuneratively or unremuneratively, all the available water resources of India, not merely in canals—I almost think we have reached the end there—but in tanks and reservoirs and wells; a police policy that will raise the standard of the only emblem of authority that the majority of the people see, and will free them from petty diurnal tyranny and oppression. It is impossible to satisfy

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all classes in India or anywhere else. There are some people who clamour for boons which it is impossible to give. But the administrator looks rather to the silent and inarticulate masses, and if he can raise even by a little the level of material comfort and well-being in their lives he has earned his reward.

I am glad that our finances in India have placed us in a position to give the people the first reduction of taxation that they have enjoyed for twenty years. We have endeavoured to render the land revenue more equable in its incidence, to lift the load of usury from the shoulders of the peasant, and to check that reckless alienation of the soil which in many parts of the country was fast converting him from a free proprietor to a bond slave. We have done our best to encourage industries which little by little will relieve the congested field of agriculture, develop the indigenous resources of India, and make that country more and more self-providing in the future. I would not indulge in any boast, but I dare to think that as the result of these efforts I can point to an India that is more prosperous, more contented, and more hopeful. Wealth is increasing in India. There is no test you can apply which does not demonstrate it. Trade is growing. Evidences of progress and prosperity are multiplying on every side. Six years ago, just before I left England, a committee of experts was sitting in London to provide us in India with that which is the first condition of economic advance—that is, a sound currency policy. I thank Sir Henry Fowler, the chairman of that committee, and the authorities co-operating with him, for the great service that they rendered to India. Profiting by their labours, we have introduced there a gold standard and

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established fixity of exchange, and we seem to have put an end to the fitful and demoralizing vagaries of the silver rupee.

But I think I can point to more satisfactory symptoms still. I believe there to be a steady and growing advance in the loyalty of the Indian people. When the late Queen Victoria died there was an outburst of sorrow throughout India almost equal to anything that you could see here in England. A little later, when the present King succeeded and we celebrated his Coronation at Delhi, there was a similar display of national feeling, not at Delhi alone, but in every village and hamlet throughout that vast continent. I know it has been the fashion in some quarters to deride that great ceremony at Delhi as a vain and unprofitable display. My Lord Mayor, if we spent about as much, and I do not think we spent more, in crowning the Emperor of 300,000,000 as you spent here in crowning the King of 42,000,000, I do not consider that we need reproach ourselves very much for our extravagance. But we did much more than that. Already the people of India knew and revered the Prince of Wales, because they had seen him. We brought home to them at Delhi that that Prince was now their ruler, and that in his rule were their security and salvation. We touched their hearts with the idea of a common sentiment and a common aim. Depend upon it, you will never rule the East except through the heart, and the moment imagination has gone out of your Asiatic policy your Empire will dwindle and decay.

There is another respect in which India has been advancing by leaps and bounds, and on which I should like to say a brief word. In the point to which I am

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about to refer I doubt if modern India would be recognized by those who knew it a generation ago. The British public knows that between one-fourth and one-fifth of the population there is under the rule of native princes and chiefs, though subject, of course, in all essentials to the British Power. There are many hundreds of these chiefs all included, but the most important of them number less than one hundred. In this country you know all about their ancient lineage, their costumes and courts, their liberality and loyalty to the Crown. But it has been too much the fashion here to regard them as so many picturesque excrescences from the dull uniformity of Indian life, to look upon them as survivals of an obsolete era, without any practical utility, and sometimes sunk in selfishness and lethargy. My Lords, that is not my idea of the Indian princes. I have always been a devoted believer in the continued existence of the native States in India, and an ardent well-wisher of the native princes. But I believe in them not as relics, but as rulers; not as puppets, but as living factors in the administration. I want them to share the responsibilities as well as the glories of British rule. Therefore it is that I have ventured to preach to them the gospel of duty, of common service in the interests of the Empire, of a high and strenuous aim. But you cannot expect them to attain these standards unless you give them an adequate education; and accordingly, in consultation with them, we have revised the entire curriculum of the Chiefs' Colleges in India, which have been set up for their instruction. And if you thus train and educate them you must give them an object and a career. It is for this reason that, by permission of His Majesty the King, I founded the

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institution known as the Imperial Cadet Corps, where we give military education to the pick of the Indian aristocracy, and which will eventuate as time goes on in the bestowal for the first time of commissions as British officers upon Indian chiefs, nobles, and gentlemen. This is a policy of trust, but I am confident that it will be repaid, for already the princes of India are giving to our efforts the reply that might be expected of their nobility of character and their high traditions. They are coming forward in response to our appeals. They welcome and do not resent these changes, and we are gradually, nay, I think we are quickly, creating there the spectacle of a throne supported by feudatories who not only render military service—they do that without stint—but who also vie with it in administrative energy and devotion to the welfare of their people.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I ought not to conclude these remarks without saying a word about another and a wider aspect of our policy—the problem of Frontier Defence. It is not necessary for me to sing the praises of the Indian army. The Indian army has written its name on the map, not only of India, but of the British Empire. It is writing its name in the windy passes of Tibet at this moment. Army reform is very much in the air, and I can assure you that in India we are not free from the contagion. We are doing our best there in respect of equipment, organization, and armament, in readiness to mobilize, and in facilities of communication, to carry out the lessons of the most recent science and the most recent experience. And since, as we have been told, you have banished our modern Hercules to the Himalayas, we are not letting him rest, but are

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utilizing him in the execution of labours every whit as important as any on which he might be engaged here.

We have had a period of almost unbroken peace for six years on that stormy frontier of India which looks towards the North-West and Afghanistan. And I think the reason is this—that, abandoning old and stale controversies, we have hit upon a policy in India that is both forward and backward—forward in so far as we hold up to our treaty frontier, neither minimizing nor shirking our obligations, backward in so far as we do not court a policy of expansion or adventure, but depend rather on a policy of co-operation and conciliation than one of coercion or subjugation of the tribes. I do not prophesy about the future. No man who has read a page of Indian history will ever prophesy about the frontier. We shall doubtless have trouble there again. Turbulence and fanaticism ferment in the blood of those races. But we have given you peace for a longer period than you have enjoyed at any time during the last thirty years, and I believe that slowly and surely we are building up the fabric of local security and contentment on the border.

But I am not sure that some student of public affairs will not interpolate at this moment the question —What, then, are you doing in Tibet; and how do you reconcile this with the policy of peace and conciliation that you have described? My Lord Mayor, the instruments of Government often cannot speak their own minds, and my lips are tied by obligations which you will be the first to recognize. At the same time, as the recent head of the Government of India, I may perhaps say this. Though we shrink in India

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from expeditions, and though we abominate a policy of adventure, we had not the slightest hesitation or doubt in recommending the policy that we did to His Majesty's Government. We felt that we could not afford any longer, with due regard to our interests and prestige on that section of the frontier, to acquiesce in a policy of unprovoked insults, endured with almost unexampled patience, at the hands of the Tibetan Government ever since they, and not we—please remember this, ever since they, and not we—assumed the aggressive, and first invaded British territory eighteen years ago. And still less could we acquiesce in this treatment at the very time when the young and perverse ruler of Tibet, who it seems to me has shown himself to be the evil genius of his people, while refusing to hold any communication with us, or even to receive letters from the representative of the British Sovereign, was conducting communications with another Great Power, situated not at his doors, but at a great distance away, and was courting its protection. I was sent to India, amongst other objects, to guard the frontier of India, and I have done it. I was not sent there to let a hostile danger and menace grow up just beyond our gates, and I have done my best to prevent it. There are people so full of knowledge at home that they assure us that all these fears were illusory, and that we could with dignity and prudence have gone on turning our other cheek to the Tibetan smiter. These fears were not illusory. The danger was imminent and real. Perhaps the frontier States may be taken to know something about it, and if we have, as we have never had before, the frontier States of Nepal and Sikkim and Bhutan, the majority of them allied

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by religious and racial affinities to Tibet, all supporting our action and deploring the folly and obstinacy of the Tibetan Government, there must be strong *prima facie* ground that we are not entirely mistaken in our views. No one regrets more than myself the fighting with innocent people or the slaughter of ill-armed but courageous men. I should have liked to carry the matter through without firing a shot, and we did our best to do so. Months were spent in the sincere but futile effort to avoid a conflict. But only the meanest knowledge of the frontier is required to know that it is not vacillation that produces respect, and that the longer you hesitate and palter the severer is the reckoning you have to pay. I hope that as a result of these operations we shall be able to introduce some measure of enlightenment into that miserable and monk-ridden country, and without adding to our own responsibilities, which the Government of India are without the least wish to extend, that we shall be able to ward off a source of political unrest and intrigue on this section of our border, and gradually to build up, as I believe it to be in our power to do, harmonious relations between the harmless people of Tibet and ourselves.

My Lords and Gentlemen, these have been the main incidents of the policy of the Government in India during the last six years. There is only one other feature of the situation to which I wish to allude, if you will bear with me, because it is in one sense the most important of all. I have been speaking to-day about the acts and symptoms of British rule in India. What is its basis? It is not military force, it is not civil authority, it is not prestige, though all these are part of it. If our rule is to last

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in India it must rest on a more solid basis. It must depend on the eternal moralities of righteousness and justice. This, I can assure you, is no mere phrase of the conventicle. The matter is too serious on the lips of a Governor-General of India for cant. Unless we can persuade the millions of India that we will give to them absolute justice as between man and man, equality before the law, freedom from tyranny and injustice and oppression, then our Empire will not touch their hearts and will fade away. No one is more ready to admit than I that if you put side by side the rulers of a European race and the ruled of an Asiatic, and particularly such races as the Indian and the English, where you have a small minority face to face with a vast alien conglomeration, you cannot expect to have complete coalescence. On the one side you have pride of race, the duty of self-protection, the consciousness of power; on the other you have struggling sentiments and stifled aspirations. But, my Lord Mayor, a bridge must be built between the two, and on that bridge justice must stand with unerring scales. Harshness, oppression, ill-usage, all these in India are offences, not only against the higher law, but against the honour and reputation of the ruling race. I am as strong a believer as any man in the prestige of my countrymen. But that prestige does not require artificial supports; it rests upon conduct and conduct alone. My precept in this respect does not differ from my practice. During the time that I have been in India, the Government have taken a strong stand for the fair treatment of our Indian fellow-subjects, who are equal with us in the eyes of God and the law. I rejoice to say that the conduct of Englishmen in

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general in India towards the Indians is exemplary, even in trying and provocative circumstances; but where exceptions occur I think that the sentiment of the majority should be as quick to condemn them as is their conduct, and that the Government, which is above race or party, and against whom any injustice is a reproach and a slur, should receive the unhesitating support of the entire community. That is the policy which the Government has pursued in my time, and by my conduct, my Lord Mayor and Gentlemen, I am willing to be judged.

I will now bring these remarks to a close. It is seventeen years since I first visited India; it is fourteen years since I first had the honour of being connected with its administration. India was the first love, and throughout all that time it has been the main love, of my political life. I have given to it some of my best years. Perhaps I may be privileged to give to it yet more. But no man could do this unless he saw before India a larger vision or were himself inspired with a fuller hope. If our Empire were to end to-morrow, I do not think that we need be ashamed of its epitaph. It would have done its duty to India, and justified its mission to mankind. But it is not going to end. It is not a moribund organism. It is still in its youth, and has in it the vitality of an unexhausted purpose. I am not with the pessimists in this matter. I am not one of those who think that we have built a mere fragile plank between the East and West which the roaring tides of Asia will presently sweep away. I do not think that our work is over or that it is drawing to an end. On the contrary, as the years roll by the call seems to me more clear, the duty more imperative,

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the work more majestic, the goal more sublime. I believe that we have it in our power to weld the people of India to a unity greater than any they have hitherto dreamed of, and to give them blessings beyond any that they now enjoy. Let no man admit the craven fear that those who have won India cannot hold it, or that we have only made India to our own or to its unmaking. That is not the true reading of history. That is not my forecast of the future. To me the message is carved in granite, it is hewn out of the rock of doom—that our work is righteous and that it shall endure.

I thank you, my Lords and Gentlemen, for the encouragement that has been given by the citizens of London through me to all those who are engaged in this great and noble undertaking. I shall go forth again refreshed and reinvigorated by your sympathy.

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II

SPEECH AT THE MANSION HOUSE, ON JULY 20, 1904

FOLLOWING the ceremony at the Guildhall, the Lord Mayor entertained a distinguished company at the Mansion House at luncheon to meet Lord Curzon "on his admission to the Freedom of the City of London."

The Lord Mayor read the following letter from Mr. Balfour:—

"My dear Lord Mayor,—The House of Commons is still sitting, and seems likely to sit. Under these circumstances, to my profound regret I am unable to take part in a ceremony to which I had been greatly looking forward. I had two motives in desiring to be present at the first ceremonial, which is, I suppose, while I am writing actually taking place. One of these was my lifelong affection for your distinguished guest, the other was my great admiration for the genius and energy with which he has administered the highest and most responsible post outside the United Kingdom which his country can confer. I much wished to give expression at the Mansion House to both these sentiments, but as hard necessity makes this impossible I hope you will, at all events, consent to read this letter to your guests."

Continuing, the Lord Mayor proposed the health

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of "The Youngest Citizen of London," to which Lord Curzon replied in the following terms:—

My Lord Mayor, your Highness, and Gentlemen, —I have already detained a large audience, some of whom I believe are also present here, at no inconsiderable length in the Guildhall, and I am afraid that I should ill requite your hospitality if I were again to trespass at any length upon the indulgence of your guests. I have yet to find the audience in England that would stand two long speeches on India in the course of the same summer afternoon. I expect that they would call aloud for an allopathic treatment. I remember reading a story of Lord Macaulay when he was first appointed a member of the Board of Control in England; while he was still studying the question of India he wrote a letter to his sister in which he said: "Am I not in fair training to become as great a bore as if I had been in India myself—that is, as great a bore as the greatest?" With this warning ringing in my ears, I fear that I must not show any great eagerness to respond to the lead which you have given me in the graceful and complimentary remarks to which I have just listened. Your speech was in itself a high compliment to me. It contained a statement of further compliment, about which, until the moment that you announced it, I was not myself certain—namely, that I am at this moment the youngest Freeman of the City of London. It was accompanied by yet another compliment in the shape of the letter which you read from the head of His Majesty's Government. I was sent out to India by one Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury; when I left England my health was proposed at a valedictory banquet by another Prime Minister, Lord

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Rosebery; and now to-day you have read out the language of compliment of a third, Mr. Balfour. Lord Salisbury had a peculiar acquaintance with India, for not only was he twice Secretary of State for that great dependency, but his despatches and minutes about the Government of India are among the very best models of official literature in the English language. Lord Rosebery is, I believe, the only English Prime Minister who has been out to India since the days of the Duke of Wellington, and I should like to commend his example to the many embryonic Premiers who are possibly seated at this table. Mr. Balfour has never yet done us that honour, but I should like also to suggest to him a visit to that great dependency as a preferable alternative to some of the experiences which will possibly lie before him in the ensuing years. However that may be, Mr. Balfour has devoted to the military and political problems arising out of our Indian Empire an amount of attention unequalled by any of his predecessors, and likely, in my opinion, to be fraught with inestimable advantage to the interests of the Empire as a whole.

My Lord Mayor, I detect only one omission in your remarks, and it has reminded me of a still greater omission in the speech that I made in the Guildhall this morning. When any assemblage of Englishmen meet together to extol the manner in which India is governed, do not let them forget the men by whom it is governed. This is the more necessary, because, owing to the conditions of their work, the majority of them are unknown at home. The Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, and a few high officials more or less fill the public eye and

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earn praise for the work which is done by others. Sometimes, it is true, they are criticized for acts on the part of their subordinates of which they have never even heard. But there can be no question that the balance is largely on the other side, and that many an official name has been written in characters that have lasted on cairns that others have raised. And who, if I may pursue the subject for a moment, are these men of whom I speak? They are drawn from every part of this country and from every rank of society. They are typical of the best of the British race and of British life. Some of them are the pick of your Universities. Others carry to India names that have already been borne in that country by generations before them. Accident, no doubt, takes some into the Civil Service, hereditary associations take others, but I believe that it is the Englishman's passion for responsibility, his zest for action on a large field, that is the ruling motive with most. And I think that they are right. For in India initiative is hourly born. There great deeds are constantly being done, there is room for fruition, there is a horizon for results. I do not mean to say that it is not so at home, but to one coming back from a long service abroad those considerations are less patent to the eye. In the Guildhall this morning I saw men who had administered provinces with a population double that of the United Kingdom, with a population half again as great as that (India excluded) of the whole British Empire. I have myself served with colleagues in India who would have been entitled to a place in any Imperial Cabinet, and who would have risen to high place in any Government in the world. It is true that the names of these men are not on

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the lips of their countrymen—their faces are unknown —but allow me to say for them, on this rare occasion when I have the opportunity of speaking, that they are the real Empire builders, for in the sweat of their brow have they laid the foundations of which you in England only see the fair and glittering superstructure as it rears its head into the sky.

I sometimes think that in the catalogue of our national virtues we hardly lay sufficient stress upon the enormous administrative ability of the English race—I speak of ability as distinguished from the moral ingredients of character and courage, which are the more obvious elements of success. And yet, in all parts of the Empire, and more especially in India, we have an amount of administrative ability which could not be purchased for millions of pounds sterling, and which is the envy of every other empire-possessing nation in the world. I hope that in what I have just said I have not given the impression that I think the service of such men is unrecognized at home. I do not believe there is any deliberate lack of interest or want of pride in their work. It arises rather from the Englishman's familiar indifference to the great things that he is doing on the face of the earth, and his fussy and parochial agitation about the small.

If I may keep you a moment longer, there is one other aspect of the work of the Civil Service in India to which I should like to refer. I spoke this morning about the magnitude of the undertaking; let me add a word about the industry that it entails. I sometimes hear people at home speak about the members of the Indian Civil Service as though they were persons who had little else to do in India but

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perspire. At least, that is their idea about the men who live and work in the plains, and as for those happy ones, including myself, who go up to Simla or the hill stations, we are regarded as the lucky denizens of places where a mild frivolity alternates with an almost Olympian repose. That is not my experience of any seat of government in India, whatever its altitude. There is a story told of two eminent Frenchmen—I believe they were M. Littré, the great lexicographer, and M. Dumas, the novelist. They are said at one time to have occupied the same residence, and to have kept such different hours of work that when one of them was going upstairs in the early morning, after completing the labours of the night, he used to meet the other coming downstairs to commence the work of the day. I do not say that we have reached that standard in India—*consule Planco*,—but there are many among the admirable officers by whom I have been served who would not find it so very startling.

While I am speaking of the service in India, let me add one word about the men in the plains. I do not think any one ought to make a speech about India without remembering the men in the plains. All through the heat of the summer, when the earth is like iron and the skies are like brass, when during the greater part of the day every chink and crevice must be closed to keep out the ravening air, these men and their wives with them—for Englishwomen in India are just as capable of devotion and heroism as are their husbands—remain at their posts devoted and uncomplaining. They sometimes remind me rather of the men who are engaged in the engine-room of a man-of-war; there they are, stoking the furnaces while the great ship is being manœuvred and the big

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guns are thundering overhead. Sometimes they go down with the vessel without ever having seen the battle or the fighting; but, if their commander wins the victory, up they come, begrimed with smoke, to take their share in the rejoicing. My Lord Mayor and gentlemen, these are the real organizers of victory; and never let any of us think of the service of his son, or brother, or relative in India without turning a thought to the men and women in the plains. Such is the character and such is the work of the men with whom it has been my privilege to co-operate during the last five and a half busy years. We have been living in strenuous times in India. I have heard it whispered that they have been too strenuous for some, but, if this be so, it is not from the members of the Civil Service that I should ever have learnt the fact. Though the work of reconstruction and reform which I was speaking about in the Guildhall this morning is one which must have imposed a heavy strain on their energies, I have never, from any one of them, young or old, high or low, heard one murmur of protest or complaint. You will pardon me if I refer to this fact on the present occasion, and if I say that in accepting the compliment you have offered to me I think much more of them. It is on their behalf, even more than on my own, that I gratefully acknowledge the gracious words that you have spoken, and thank you for the manner in which you have proposed my health.

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III

SPEECH ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH OF DERBY, ON JULY 28, 1904

On Thursday afternoon, July 28, 1904, the Freedom of the Borough of Derby was presented to Lord Curzon, in the Drill Hall at Derby, before a large and distinguished audience, drawn from all parts of Derbyshire, his native county. After speeches by Alderman Sir T. Roe, M.P., and Alderman Sir H. Bemrose, the Mayor (Mr. Councillor Boam) invited Lord Curzon to sign the roll. This he did, and then spoke as follows:—

Mr. Mayor, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am very grateful for the great reception that was accorded to Lady Curzon and myself as we drove through the streets of the town this afternoon, and for the references that have been made to her in the speeches to which we have just listened. I acknowledge with sincere thanks the great honour that has just been conferred upon me by the Mayor and Corporation of this ancient borough. That beautiful casket there, which contains the certificate of the freedom, will always remain in my family, and will be highly prized and jealously guarded by them in generations to come. I hope I am not fanciful in detecting a certain difference in the character of the reception which you

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have accorded me to-day from those which I have been fortunate enough to meet with elsewhere during the past few weeks. On those occasions I have felt that the compliment that was offered to me was paid quite as much to the post which I have been filling during the past five years, to the service of which I have been the head, and to the Government which it has been my duty to administer, as it was to myself. But to-day I seem to recognize a more personal and, I should like to say, even a domestic, flavour about these proceedings. It is true that the honour that is being bestowed upon me is the freedom of the borough of Derby, an honour not, I believe, given during the past seventy years, and one which any public man might be proud to receive. The practice of conferring this distinction is one of the few means left to representative bodies and institutions in this country of showing their consideration to those public servants whom they desire to honour. It is a practice that I hope may never be abrogated or done away with. But it has a separate value when it emanates from those who have known a man from childhood, and when it represents the verdict, not of strangers or outsiders, but of lifelong friends. For it shows, not merely that they are generous in their recognition of public service—that is a mark for which the people of England have always been distinguished—but that the recipient of the honour has survived the test of a long experience, and has not been found wanting by those who have had an opportunity of watching every stage of his career.

It is true, ladies and gentlemen, it is unfortunately true, that I have not been in Derby much of recent years. Twenty years ago, when I was engaged upon

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an enterprise that had a somewhat unpropitious ending, I was more frequently in this place. The first speech that I ever delivered to a large public audience was delivered from this platform, in this very hall. In those days I used sometimes to have mimic encounters—very mimic encounters—with your distinguished representative, Sir William Harcourt. Then I recollect going one day to the Midland Railway Station to address the railwaymen during their luncheon hour. I am afraid that they were not in very close sympathy with my political views. Anyhow, I remember that my remarks were received with considerable disturbance, and with volleys of small paper pellets filled with soot, which freely struck me over the face and shoulders. One more recollection I possess, and that is my speech in the County Hall of Derby, when, after the election of 1885, it was my duty to thank the electors of this division of the county for having placed me in a minority of two thousand at the bottom of the poll. On that occasion I had the temerity to offer a wager to my successful antagonist that I would address the House of Commons before he did. With some prudence he declined the wager, which, I may say, if he had accepted it, I should most certainly have won. All these memories come surging around me to-day, and many more to which I have not the time to allude; but point is lent to them by the fact that the two principal speakers whom we have here this afternoon, and who have talked in such gracious and kindly terms about myself, were also the two protagonists in those bygone days, and have been, ever since, the leaders of the two political parties in this borough. I do not think the occasions have been very numerous

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upon which the three of us—Sir Thomas Roe, Sir Henry Bemrose, and myself—have appeared upon the same platform in Derby. Two of us used frequently to be there, but the third was somewhere else. These two gentlemen were engaged for many years in trying to convince the free and enlightened electors of this borough that each was the best-qualified person to represent it in the House of Commons, and the electors, with an admirable discrimination and impartiality, responded to that appeal by electing each in turn. Now, ladies and gentlemen, that we are all reconciled and meet together as a happy family, I find in this fact an illustration of that good humour which is one of the most cherished possessions of the British people, and also a tribute to the purely non-party character of the post that during the last five and a half years I have been privileged to hold.

I do not think I can exaggerate the importance of the consideration to which I have just drawn attention. Party has nothing whatever to do with India, and ought never to have anything to do with it. India stands outside of party. We know nothing there of the party labels of Liberal and Conservative, or Unionist and Radical, or even of those more recent metaphors drawn from the farmyard which fill so large a part in the political controversy of the day. During the time that I have been serving in India I have almost forgotten to what party I originally belonged in this country, and I have received—and am grateful for the fact—the support of both political parties at home. I should like myself to go further. I should like to place a ring-fence round the whole British Empire, with a notice board, on which should be written, "Any party man will be prosecuted who

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trespasses here." For to me the Empire is so sacred and so noble a thing that I cannot understand people quarrelling about it, or even holding opposite opinions about it. But I know as a matter of fact that they do, and that what to one man appears to be a splendid and beneficent conception strikes another, some others, at any rate, as a vulgar and even contemptible form of greed. Therefore I am afraid that I must remain an idealist in respect of the Empire. But as regards India let there be no dispute and no doubt that party and India ought never to have anything to do with each other, and must never be brought into the same connection.

There was a time in the past when the Government of India was made the sport of political parties in this country. Indeed, there have been two periods in British history when this was pre-eminently the case. The first was at the end of the eighteenth century, when the government of India, or the misgovernment of India, whichever it was, was undoubtedly treated as a move in the political game. That great and ill-used man, Warren Hastings—one of the most eminent although the most suffering public servants that we have ever known—was prosecuted, not for what he had done or what he had not done in India—for most of the charges against him were false—but in order to do injury to the political party that had appointed and supported him at home. Then later on, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Manchester school of politicians—that school of high aspirations and futile performance—took up the question of India, and once again nearly converted it into a party cry. Fortunately the danger of both these periods has passed away, and I hope that it is

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now impossible to revive them. The reasons for which it would be so pernicious to introduce anything like party into the government of India are very obvious, and must be known to all of you. In the first place remember this: the lines of cleavage in India are entirely different from what they are here. Here they are mainly political, between the two parties, both of whom I am glad to see represented in this hall. In India they are racial, religious, and social. In so far as they are political at all, they represent the inevitable line of cleavage between the rulers and the ruled, and that is a gap which in India we are always doing our best to bridge over, and to fill up. You may imagine, therefore, what a mistake it would be to add another to the numerous causes of fissure that already exist in that country, and particularly one so mischievous in its character and so deleterious in its results. The second reason is this: If there is one thing that India wants for its gradual recuperation, and that the Government of India more than anything else desire in their effort to carry it out, it is continuity of administration. Nothing can be more fatal than that violent oscillations of policy should either occur, or should be expected to occur, when one party goes out and another party comes in in this country. It has been one of the main sources of the weakness and even of the failure of our frontier policy in India that the two parties in this country have held different views about it, and that one party was supposed to be always wishing to push forward, whilst the other was credited with a desire to hang back. More than one of my predecessors in the Governor-Generalship of India have been recalled or have retired for this reason, when their party was

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defeated at the polls in England, and this fatal system has been the cause of more blunders and bloodshed on the Indian frontier than any other cause that I can for the moment think of. But the third reason is, I think, the most important of all. In the tremendous task that confronts us in India we want all Englishmen to be united. We cannot afford to have any divisions amongst ourselves. If I may take an illustration from another sphere, we have many of us seen how terribly handicapped the Christian Church is in its struggles with pagan religions by its own subdivisions into so many sects and denominations and creeds. Do not let us repeat that mistake in the sphere of Imperial statecraft. Let every man who works for India in India, or who thinks about India in England, do it not as a party man, but as a national man. Let India be regarded as so sacred a thing that it ought never to be fought about on British hustings, and never introduced as a plank into a party programme in this country.

I was wondering a day or two ago upon what particular aspect of Indian government I should say a few words to this audience this afternoon, when I found in my library a volume of the collected speeches of John Bright. He, as you know, took a great interest in India, and his speeches upon that subject which were contained in this volume were delivered between forty and fifty years ago, just after the great Mutiny had swept like a tornado across the face of India, and when the ideas of men were in a state of fluidity as to what the future was going to bring forth, or what form the Government of India ought to assume. These speeches of Mr. Bright were characterized by great and unaffected sympathy for the

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Indian peoples, by those lofty principles which seem to me to have invariably inspired his public action, and by that beauty and simplicity of language which remind one, in the ordered flow of his argument and the rhythmical cadence of his words, of the plash of waves upon the sea shore. But these speeches almost without exception were striking illustrations of the proposition that I have just been discussing, for they were all of them dominated by the narrow and, as it seems to me, mistaken tenets of a particular political school.

To me it has always seemed a remarkable thing that the three most powerful intellects in the sphere of British politics that have ever seriously devoted themselves to the study of Indian problems should all have been so wrong in their verdicts, and, as it seems to me, all for the same reason. I speak of Burke, Macaulay, and Bright. The eloquence of Burke poured like a stream of lava across the whole field of Indian administration. But it very often scorched and disfigured quite as much as it illumined what it touched, and his presentation of the Indian incidents of his day, whatever it be as rhetoric or as literature—and in my view it is magnificent as both—was most certainly not history. Then fifty years later we come to Macaulay. Just now I mentioned to you the name of Warren Hastings, and I said with truth that Warren Hastings was a man greatly to be pitied, and perhaps chiefly to be pitied for this: During his lifetime he was exposed to the passionate and unjust invective of Burke, and when he died and all this calumny ought to have been hushed in the grave, his reputation was, so to speak, exhumed again, and subjected to the unfair and partisan censure of Macaulay. Lord Macaulay

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rendered great service to India, particularly in the domain of law and education. He did what men of genius almost invariably do. He made everything round him palpitate and glow with the reflex of his own intellectual force. But his Essays, which I suppose are the foundation of all that nine out of ten of us in this hall know about India, contained quite as much fiction as fact, and are often most vexatiously inaccurate and misleading. Finally, we come to the time of John Bright. His views about India, which I shall briefly mention to you in illustration of the position that I take up, were, in some respects, the most erroneous of all. I do not allude to the picture that Mr. Bright drew of the Government of India in his day, though I believe it to have been grossly exaggerated. He described the Civil Service of India as arrogant and tyrannous, the military service as clamorous and insatiable for expenditure, the people as crushed and downtrodden, education as trampled upon, crime as rampant, trade as stifled, communications as non-existent. I believe that that was not a true picture in his time, and it is certainly not a true picture now. He said that the Government of India was not a Government for watching over the people or conferring blessings upon them. I believe that that remark was not wholly true then; I believe it to be wholly untrue now. But I think that his forecasts were even more erroneous than his opinions. He held that the post of Governor-General was one so high and so great that it ought not to be filled by any subject of the Crown, and he laid down that the indispensable preliminary to the good government of India was the abolition of that post. I should not be addressing you here this afternoon

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if that advice had been followed, although it is not on personal, so much as on public, grounds that I greatly rejoice that it was never done. He went on to say that the only way by which good government could be secured in India was to split up that country into a number of separate presidencies or provinces, each with a separate and almost independent Government, and with a separate army of its own. I greatly rejoice that that advice was never carried out. I believe it would have been almost disastrous in its results. In 1858 he said: "The immense Empire that has been conquered by you in India is too vast for management; its base is in decay." When he spoke those words the population of India was 150 millions; it is now 295 millions. When he spoke, the revenues of India were 30 millions; they are now nearly 80 millions. And yet the Empire of India is no nearer dissolution than it was in his time. On the contrary, I think it is a great deal further from it; and so far from its foundations being based in decay, I believe that every year that passes it is striking its roots deeper and deeper into the soil.

Then I come—and I have only one more quotation—to the famous passage in which he said: "Does any man with the smallest glimmering of common sense believe that so great a country, with its twenty different nations, and its twenty languages, can ever be bound up and consolidated into one compact and enduring Empire? I believe such a thing [he said] to be utterly impossible; we must fail in the attempt if ever we make it." Well, we have added a good many nations and a good many languages to that Empire since then, and I am here to-day to say that in my opinion, and, I believe, in the opinion of

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most of those who know anything about India and who have worked with me during the past five years, that which Mr. Bright regarded as an utter impossibility is neither a chimera nor a dream. Let me at once concede the extreme difficulty of the task. I do not say that we have attained our goal. Perhaps we are not even in sight of it. It is impossible to produce absolute unity among 300 millions of people. Sir Henry Bemrose alluded in his remarks to the speech which I made the other day at the Guildhall. In that speech I said something about our rule in India covering the whole space between barbarism at one end and civilization at the other. Let me tell you a little story which, in a parable, will indicate that which otherwise might take a great many words. I remember hearing of an English sportsman in India who examined the arrows in the quiver of a native *shikari* belonging to one of the aboriginal tribes. He found the first arrow tipped with stone—a relic of the neolithic age; the next arrow was tipped with electric telegraph wire, a theft from the twentieth century. That story is typical of the whole of India. It conveys to you the amazing synthesis of anthropology, of history, of human experience, which is gathered within the boundaries of that great area. You may imagine that with a people so diversified, representing such opposite poles of creed and civilization, complete unity is a thing which we cannot aspire to produce. India must always remain a constellation rather than a single star, must always be a continent rather than a country, a congeries of races rather than a single nation. But we are creating ties of unity among those widely diversified peoples, we are consolidating those vast and outspread territories,

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and, what is more important, we are going forward instead of backward. It is not a stationary, a retrograde, a downtrodden, or an impoverished India that I have been governing for the past five and a half years. Poverty there is in abundance. I defy any one to show me a great and populous country, or a great and populous city, where it does not exist. Misery and destitution there are. The question is not whether they exist, but whether they are growing more or growing less. In India, where you deal with so vast a canvas, I dare say the lights and shades of human experience are more vivid and more dramatic than elsewhere. But if you compare the India of to-day with the India of any previous period of history—the India of Alexander, of Asoka, of Akbar, or of Aurungzeb—you will find greater peace and tranquillity, more widely diffused comfort and contentment, superior justice and humanity, and higher standards of material well-being, than that great dependency has ever previously attained.

I am sometimes lost in amazement at those critics who fail to see these things, who protest to us that our rule in India is ruining the country and crushing the people; and I am still more amazed when I reflect that that class of critic is, as a rule, to be found among a small set of my own countrymen. It seems to me so perverse—I had almost said so wicked. The cant of self-praise is a disagreeable thing, but the cant of self-depreciation seems to me to be even more nauseating. Of the two types of Pharisee, the man who takes pride in his virtues is often a less offensive spectacle than the man who revels in imaginary sins. If it were strangers or foreigners or outsiders who held these views, and announced

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to us that our rule in India was a failure and a crime, we perhaps should not be so much surprised; we might attribute it to jealousy, or ignorance, or suspicion. But the very reverse is the case, and sometimes while I am reading the almost ferocious diatribes of a small number of my own countrymen about the alleged iniquity of our rule in India, I am simultaneously receiving letters from thinkers and men of action in other countries asking me to tell them what is the secret of our wonderful and unparalleled success. Year after year a stream of intelligent foreigners comes to India from France, from Germany, from America, from distant Japan, to study our methods and to copy our institutions. Book after book records the results of their inquiries and the admiration which they feel at the results. I take heart when I feel that I can appeal to this enlightened international jury in justification of the work that the rulers of India are doing. And whenever you meet any of the critics of the class whom I am describing, I commend to you this particular form of confutation.

I am not so bold as to say that we make no mistakes in India. I dare say we make a great many. I am quite willing to claim a most liberal share for myself. Our rule is sometimes inflexible and harsh and unyielding, or, if it is not so, it appears to be so to the people. It is so difficult to understand them; it is so much more difficult sometimes to get them to understand us. The points of view of the governor and the governed, and still more of the Asiatic and the European, are so wide apart that one hardly knows where to find a hyphen to connect them. It is impossible to explain everything that we are doing in India, or to meet and to check every form of

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misapprehension and attack. Let me give you an illustration. It is widely believed in many parts of India that the Government has purposely introduced the plague into that country in order to decimate the population, and thereby to render our task of government more easy. Well, you will say to me, "A most extraordinary thing! But, of course, that can only apply to the very ignorant." Quite true. But the very ignorant are the enormous majority, the overwhelming majority, of the entire population. Even among the educated and intelligent classes, the most astonishing misconceptions prevail. For instance, if I take any particular branch of the administration and endeavour to reform it with the object of producing a higher state of efficiency and that alone, I find myself at once exposed to the charge that I am creating a number of unnecessary and lucrative billets to be filled by my countrymen from England. As if an administrator cares one snap what is the nationality of the man whom he wants for a post! What he wants is the best man for the post, and the work to be best done. If he can get a native, so much the better. The service of the native is cheaper; they know the language, the traditions, the customs of the country; they are inured to its climate. We take them where we can, but if we cannot find a native with the requisite scientific knowledge or the expert training, then we have to come to this country to get the man, even if we have to pay rather more for him. Well, the whole thing seems to me—would seem to any of us—so obvious as scarcely to require explanation. Yet I can assure you that it is one of the most fertile causes of misrepresentation and attack from one end of India to the other.

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In this state of public feeling we have to be very patient in India, and to be indifferent to the various forms of misrepresentation and abuse. For my own part I think the highest duty that a ruler of India can set before himself is to create, if I may so describe them, special interpreters between the people and ourselves, to explain our ideas to them and theirs to us. It is with this object that while I have been there I have done my best on all occasions to take the public into my confidence, and to explain to them what I have done or what I meditate doing. The one thing in governing an Asiatic country is to break down the barriers between the hearts and consciences of men; and the man who can bring together the hearts of the peoples or races who are on either side of the barrier, and make them beat more closely together by a single pulsation, is a greater public benefactor than the conqueror of kingdoms. I have only one more thing to say. When I hear eulogies passed, as I did three-quarters of an hour ago, upon the administration in which I have taken a part during the past five years, I am sometimes afraid lest people should think that it differs very much from that which has preceded it, or from that which will follow. No one man is necessary in any post in the world. I have come to the conclusion that no one man is very important. One who may be younger and tougher may carry on his work longer and more energetically before he breaks down. One man may enjoy good fortune and opportunities that are denied to another. But that is about all the difference. The machine in India is so vast that it is independent of the individual, or, rather, it is composed of the concentrated energies and abilities of so many individuals that to single one out

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for praise is merely to follow the recognized practice of rewarding troops in the person of the commander. I should not have been standing here to receive the freedom of the borough of Derby to-day if great and distinguished Viceroys and Governors-General, with whom I do not venture to compare myself, had not preceded me and built the foundations upon which I have only laid another course. And when I have passed away and am forgotten, other and abler men will come after me, who will produce better results, and earn a more-deserved applause. My sole ambition has been, during the time allowed to me, to add something to the solidity of that marvellous fabric of British rule in India, to repair, if possible, some of its weak places, and to leave it more enduring. No greater reward do I desire, or can I receive, than that the people of my native country, and perhaps even more the inhabitants of my native county and native town, should recognize that my intentions have been sincere, and that I have not laboured altogether in vain.

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IV

SPEECH AT A LUNCHEON GIVEN BY THE UNITED CLUB, ON AUGUST 1, 1904

On Monday, August 1st, Lord Curzon was entertained, at the Constitutional Club, at luncheon by the members of the United Club. The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P. (the President), occupied the chair, and was supported by Lord Roberts and a large number of members of the House of Commons. Mr. Balfour proposed the health of Lord Curzon, but was obliged immediately afterwards to return to the House of Commons. Lord Curzon rose shortly afterwards to reply, and said—

Mr. Vice-Chairman and Gentlemen,—When the Committee of the United Club first asked me to be their guest at a public dinner, shortly after I returned to England, I felt greatly tempted to accept the invitation, both because of the compliment it conveyed and also for the opportunity that it would give me of meeting so many members of the party with which I used to be associated, and among which I count so many friends; but at that time I felt compelled to refuse, partly for a reason which Mr. Balfour would find a difficulty in understanding—namely, that I was not in good health,—but still more because I was very doubtful whether during the short interval that I am

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spending in England between two periods of my Indian administration it would be at all right or proper for me to attend at a public function which might be thought to present a party character. Then your committee pressed me to attend at a more informal gathering, and I really did not think there was anything in the compunction that I had previously felt that need deprive me of the pleasure of coming to an entertainment like the present, or prevent me from meeting so many to whom I was attached in the days now long gone by, and with whom I hope to work again in the future. Of course, it is a great additional compliment to me to have been supported as I have found myself at this table. On my right hand I have had the most distinguished of all Indian commanders, on my left has been the Prime Minister. And I must really set it down as an additional bad point to the many with which we are already familiar in the party system, that for the second occasion during the last fortnight has that system deprived me of the privilege of his presence at the very moment when I was about to reply to the compliments that he had lavished upon me. Mr. Balfour said in his remarks that he and I were very old friends. That is quite true. Mr. Balfour possesses, as we all know, the rare quality of attaching men to him, not only by the strongest ties of political loyalty, but also by those of personal affection. In him all parties in this country regard with respect the first Minister of the Empire. His own party follows him with unquestioning confidence as its leader. But there is another sentiment, warmer, I think, and stronger, which is the happy and peculiar prerogative of his personal friends. When Lord Salisbury died

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there was not the slightest strain or effort on the part of any of us who were servants of the Crown in transferring our allegiance to Mr. Balfour, and if he were present I could assure him that he has the devoted adherence of followers in all parts of the Empire quite as much as any he can lay claim to at home. We who serve the Empire abroad recognize in him a statesman who is imbued with the larger spirit, the finer sense, of Empire, who lifts every subject that he touches on to a higher moral and intellectual plane, and who, we believe, is actuated in governing the country, not by any petty or transient motives of expediency, but by a wide and far-seeing conception of the public good. Mr. Balfour was kind enough to make some remarks about myself to which I do not quite know in what spirit or manner I ought to reply. I feel almost tempted to say that for the first time in my experience Mr. Balfour dipped his brush in the colours of the impressionist school; indeed, it was the only political portrait I have known him to draw which seemed conspicuously wanting in fidelity to the original. However that may be, I am, of course, very grateful for the kind remarks that he made about myself. I am really not conscious of having done anything in India except that very obvious and simple thing, my duty, and I can only attribute it to the generous recognition of public service, to which we are so accustomed in this country, that I have received anything in the nature of acknowledgment or reward.

I spoke just now of the extent to which I have been the victim in the past few weeks in England of the party system. Those who occupy the sort of position that I have been filling in India in the past

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five and a half years stand in a very peculiar relationship to that system. From that great distance we see the political game going on here—I need hardly explain that I do not use the word in an invidious sense—much as a sailor may look on at the manœuvres of a fleet from the crow's-nest of a man-of-war; but we occupy a position towards it all of quite curious detachment. Getting our papers, as we do, some three weeks after the events they record, I am sorry to say that we skim very cursorily the debates in the House of Commons. We are even so impertinent as sometimes to doubt whether the House of Commons is either the best or the most sacred institution in the world. Those of us who have been in the House in former days see our old friends still at the mill—see the two sides engaged in saying much the same things and doing pretty much the same things as they were doing years before. Probably it is all quite necessary and quite right, for we are told that this is the only system in the world that can provide a constitutional country not only with an actual Government, but with a potential Government in reserve, although I am not sure that recent events have not thrown some doubt even upon that hypothesis. In India the case with us is quite different. There we think a great deal, and every day, about the Empire, but we are not so much concerned with party; and in so far as we turn our attention to the latter, the party that we want is the one which will remember that the Empire has a circumference as well as a centre, and that, although the lifeblood goes out from the heart to the extremities, it also comes back from the extremities to the heart. The ideal party for us in India, that is the ideal party at home, is the one

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that will recognize the place of India in the Imperial system—namely, as an organic factor, not as a troublesome appendage, which will act both as the impartial umpire as well as the superior authority in the disputes that sometimes arise between us, and that will not unduly favour the home country at our expense. That is the sort of party that we desire. I should probably be making a partisan observation if I were to indicate whether we have or have not such a party in office at home at present.

I have very little to say to you about India to-day. The fact is, I doubt if anywhere India would make a very good luncheon dish; it lies a little heavy on the palate. During the last ten days I have been called upon to discharge what I think is one of the most onerous duties that I have ever had to perform —that is, to make three long speeches about India to audiences on hot summer afternoons. The experiment is one that does not bear repetition either in the interests of the speaker or of the audience; besides which, I know that many of you have engagements a little distance from here, from which I must not keep you.

But there is one observation which I should like to make. My main object during the past few years in India has been identical with that which I take to have been the object of every Governor-General before me and of every patriotic Englishman who knows India, namely, to render the foundations of our rule in that country more secure; and, if you ask me why, the reason is not for the honour and glory of the thing, still less for the selfish advantage of England or Englishmen. We must remain in India, because if we were to withdraw the whole system

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of Indian life and politics would fall to pieces like a pack of cards. We are absolutely necessary to India. That is recognized by the best of the people themselves, just as it is by us; and I think that the bitterest foe of England, if he were also a true friend of India, would be the first man to vote against our departure. I cannot myself conceive of a time as remotely possible in which it would be either practicable or desirable that we should take our hand from the Indian plough. Carlyle once posed a curious question—namely, whether the British people would sooner lose their Shakespeare or their Indian Empire, and he decided in the favour of the latter, because, he said, "your Indian Empire in any case must go sooner or later, but this Shakespeare cannot go; he lasts for ever with us. We cannot give up our Shakespeare." Well, I find it somewhat difficult to decide between such incongruous factors as an author and an Empire, but I venture to submit that no comparison is necessary. There is no reason why we should lose either. Let us keep both. Let India remain our India just as much as Shakespeare is our Shakespeare—that is to say, as a part of the inalienable heritage of Englishmen and the lasting glory of the British race.

I believe I see before me many of the rising members of one of the great parties in the State, and a good many also of the risen. Some of you are in Parliament already; others, we hope, will follow their footsteps towards that desirable goal. Is there any message that I can give to you from India? I think it is this—in the first place, come out and see us. Should any of you find yourselves at no remote distance of time in what are euphemistically called

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"the cold shades of Opposition," come out and get a touch of the Eastern sun. A hospitable welcome will always await you in Calcutta, and we will show you there and elsewhere a great deal that will interest you, inspire you, and make you proud of your country. Then, when you come home again, keep a warm corner for India in your hearts; but do not bother us with an excessive display of Parliamentary affection. There was a distinguished Indian statesman, Sir Charles Metcalfe, who recorded his opinion seventy years ago that India would be lost on the floor of the House of Commons. I think that that was an exaggerated sentiment. I do not see why India should be lost there or anywhere else. Indeed, if any such crisis were impending, I should be disposed to look to the patriotism and common sense of the House of Commons to avert any such disaster. But no such question, happily, arises, and meanwhile we appeal to the practical sympathy, the interest, and the sense of justice and of duty of the House of Commons. Parliamentary interference we do not require, but a high and lofty sense of Parliamentary responsibility I think we have a claim to expect, for, wherever the ultimate and sovereign power rests, there also the rights of dependencies find their security and protection. I will not detain you further; but among the compliments that I have received since I have been in England there is none which I value more highly than this informal gathering of old associates and old friends, and I shall always look back upon it with the utmost pleasure.

THE END

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